

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. **(Currently Amended)** An adjustable-length actuating element, comprising
  - an energy storing device (15, 46, 46', 69, 69''');
  - a casing (2, 28, 2''');
  - a piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9''') which is extended from the casing (2, 28, 2''') and movable relative thereto and has an external end;
  - a first fastening element (4, 33, 33''') on the end of the casing (2, 28, 2''') opposite to where the piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9''') exits; and
  - a second fastening element (22, 45, 45''') on the external end of the piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9''');
  - a spindle drive which is integrated in the energy storing ~~devices~~ device (15, 46, 46', 69, 69''') and disposed between the casing (2, 28, 2''') and the piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9'''); and
  - a driving shaft (24, 26a), which is in rotary driving connection with the piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9''').
2. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, wherein a gear (16, 16', 47, 47', 47''') is provided between the driving shaft (24, 26a) and the piston rod (9, 9', 39, 39', 9''').
3. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein the gear is a worm gear (16, 16').
4. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein the gear is a toothed gear (47, 47''').

5. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein the gear (16, 16', 47''') is axially tightly joined to the piston rod (9, 9', 39', 9''').

6. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein the gear (47) is axially tightly joined to the casing (28).

7. **(Cancelled)**

8. **(Currently Amended)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, ~~wherein further comprising an overload clutch is provided in the rotary driving connection between the driving shaft and the piston rod.~~

9. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 8, wherein the overload clutch is a slip clutch (58).

10. **(Currently Amended)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein the spindle drive and the gear (16, 16', 47, 47''') are not self-locking.

11. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, wherein the driving shaft (24) is connected to a motor (26).

12. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, wherein a motor (26) is fixed to the casing (28).

13. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, wherein the energy storing device is a gas spring (15, 46, 46'), the casing (2, 28) of which has an interior space (10, 37) filled with compressed gas and from the casing (2, 28) of which the piston rod (9, 9'; 39, 39') is sealingly extended.

14. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 1, wherein the energy storing device is a compression spring (69, 69'') which is disposed between the first fastening element (4, 33'') and the second fastening element (22, 45'').

15. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 14, wherein the compression spring (69'') is disposed at least partially in a protecting tube (78).

16. **(Original)** An adjustable-length actuating element according to claim 2, wherein at least one of the spindle drive and the gear (16, 16', 47) is self-locking.